

don't be a boss; be a mentor

David Wee, managing director, Lee Hecht Harrison, advises what you can do to turn your employees into your company's future managers



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The success of your employees is the best way to judge your success as a manager. The best managers are not necessarily the ones who can extract the most productivity from their people, but are those who produce great future managers. How can you be sure that your best people will someday be top-notch leaders? You can start by checking out the following basic, yet effective tips for being a better manager, and developing managerial skills among your employees.

Start with motivation

The easiest way to show your people how to be a good manager is – being a good manager yourself. And it all starts with your attitude. If you are charismatic and motivating, rather than cold and demanding, your team will produce more for you. It is up to you as manager, to create a winning environment and make your employees believe that they play a major part in your company's achievements.

In addition, make sure you give your people the same amount of respect you would give your superior. Remain humble, stand up

for your people when necessary, give credit to your team when it is due and never publicly criticise an employee's performance.

Emphasise on communication

Start by listening effectively. Take the time to sit with your employees, look them in the eye and have an actual conversation. Learning what each employee wants to get out of his or her job will help you determine who has the makings of a good manager and who still needs some guidance.

Another surefire way to help your employees advance their careers is by telling them exactly what they need to do in order to get ahead. Being open and honest with your people will help them feel more involved and empowered and will better prepare them when the time comes to manage a team of their own.

Provide enough preparation

An effective career development plan is essential to help your people hone their skills and advance their careers. Find out what interests them and send them to any seminars, workshops or meetings that cover these topics.

In addition to providing quality training, make sure you regularly follow up with your employees and ask for their feedback on the programme. A strong career development plan not only makes it easier to promote from within your own organisation, it also helps you retain your top people.

The final step: promotion

Once you have provided your people with training and tools they need to succeed, set them aside and let them go to work. Start by giving them additional responsibilities or asking for their input on an important matter. Invite them to join special project teams or planning sessions or find reasons for them to make presentations at higher-level staff meetings to senior executives.

Remember, if you show confidence in your employees, they will, in turn, develop confidence in themselves and their decisions – an important trait of a good manager. HR

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